

(second edition, revised and corrected)

SALMAGUNDI;
OR, THE
WHIM-WHAMS AND OPINIONS
OF
LAUNCELOT LANGSTAFF, ESQ.
AND OTHERS.

In hoc est hoax, cum quiz et joke~~ez~~,

Et smoken, toastem, roastein folksez,

Fee, faw, fum.

Psalmazat.

With baked, and broiled, and stewed, and toasted,

And fried, and boiled, and smoked, and roasted,

We treat the town.

NO. X.] • *Saturday, May 16, 1807.*

FROM MY ELBOW-CHAIR.

The long interval which has elapsed since the publication of our last number, like many other remarkable events, has given rise to much conjecture and excited considerable solicitude. It is but a day or two since I heard a knowing young gentleman observe, that he suspected Salmagundi would be a fine days wonder, and had even prophesied that the ninth would be our last effort. But the age of prophecy, as well as that of chivalry, is past; and no reasonable man should now venture to foretel aught but what he is determined to bring about himself:—he may then, if he please, monopolize prediction, and be honoured as a prophet even in his own country.

Though I hold whether we write, or not write, to be none of the publick's business, yet as I have just heard of the loss of three thousand votes at least, to the Clintonians, I feel in a remarkable dulcet humour thereupon, and will give some account of

the reasons which induced us to resume our useful labours—or rather our amusements ; for, if writing cost either of us a moment's labour, there is not a man but what would hang up his pen, to the great detriment of the world at large, and of our publisher in particular, who has actually bought himself a pair of trunk breeches, with the profits of our writings !!

He informs me that several persons having called last Saturday for No. X, took the disappointment so much to heart that he really apprehended some terrible catastrophe ; and one good-looking man in particular, expressed his intention of quitting the country, if the work was not continued. Add to this, the town has grown quite melancholy in the last fortnight ; and several young ladies have declared in my hearing, that if another number did not make its appearance soon, they would be obliged to amuse themselves with teasing their beaux, and making them miserable. Now I assure my readers there was no flattery in this, for they no more suspected me of being Launcelot Langstaff, than they suspect me of being the emperor of China, or the man in the moon.

I have also received several letters complaining of our indolent procrastination ; and one of my correspondents assures me that a number of young gentlemen, who had not read a book through since they left school, but who have taken a wonderful liking to our paper, will certainly relapse into their old habits, unless we go on.

For the sake, therefore, of all these good people, and most especially for the satisfaction of the ladies, every one of whom we would love, if we possibly could, I have again wielded my pen, with a most hearty determination to set the whole world to

rights, to make cherubims and seraphims of all the fair ones of this enchanting town, and raise the spirits of the poor federalists, who, in truth, seem to be in a sad taking, ever since the american ticket met with the accident of being so unhappily *dished*.

TO LAUNCELOT LANGSTAFF, ESQ.

SIR,

I felt myself hurt and offended by mr. Evergreen's terrible phillipick against modern musick, in No. II of your work, and was under serious apprehension that his strictures might bring the art, which I have the honour to profess, into contempt. The opinions of yourself and fraternity, appear indeed to have a wonderful effect upon the town. I am told the ladies are all employed in reading Bunyan and Pamela, and the waltz has been entirely forsaken ever since the winter balls have closed. Under these apprehensions I should have addressed you before, had I not been sedulously employed, while the theatre continued open, in supporting the astonishing variety of the orchestra, and in composing a new chime or Bob-major for Trinity-church, to be rung during the summer, beginning with *ding-dong di-do*, instead of *di-do ding-dong*. The citizens, especially those who live in the neighbourhood of that harmonious quarter, will no doubt be infinitely delighted with this novelty.

But to the object of this communication.—So far, sir, from agreeing with mr Evergreen, in thinking that all modern musick is but the mere dregs and drainings of the antient, I trust, before this letter is concluded, I shall convince you and him that some of the late professors of this enchanting art have completely distanced the paltry

efforts of the antients, and that I in particular have at length brought it almost to absolute perfection.

The greeks, simple souls! were astonished at the powers of Orpheus, who made the woods and rocks dance to his lyre—of Amphion who converted crotchets into bricks, and quavers into mortar—and of Arion who won upon the compassion of the fishes. In the fervency of admiration, their poets fabled that Apollo had lent them his lyre, and inspired them with his own spirit of harmony. What then would they have said had they witnessed the wonderful effects of my skill? Had they heard me, in the compass of a single piece, describe in glowing notes one of the most sublime operations of nature, and not only make inanimate objects dance, but even speak, and not only speak, but speak in strains of exquisite harmony?

Let me not, however, be understood to say that I am the sole author of this extraordinary improvement in the art, for I confess I took the hint of many of my discoveries from some of those meritorious productions that have lately come abroad and made so much noise under the title of *over-tures*. From some of these, as, for instance, Lodoiska, and the battle of Marengo, a gentleman, or a captain in the city-militia, or an amazonian young lady, may indeed acquire a tolerable idea of military tacticks, and become very well experienced in the firing of musketry, the roaring of cannon, the rattling of drums, the whistling of fifes, braying of trumpets, groans of the dying, and trampling of cavalry, without ever going to the wars;—but it is more especially in the art of imitating inimitable things, and giving the language of every passion and sentiment of the human mind without the assistance of speech, that I particularly excel the most

celebrated musicians of antient and modern times.

I think, sir, I may venture to say there is not a sound in the whole compass of nature which I cannot imitate and even improve upon—nay, what I consider the perfection of my art, I have discovered a method of expressing, in the most striking manner, that undefinable, indescribable silence which accompanies the falling of snow.

In order to satisfy you that I do not arrogate to myself what I am unable to perform, I will detail to you a few of the movements of a grand piece which I pride myself upon exceedingly, called the Breaking up of the Ice in the North-river.

The piece opens with a gentle *andante affettuoso*, soft, sleepy, and monotonous, intended to represent a discussion in the house of assembly at Albany, which always breaks up at the same time with the river; the speaker delivers his farewell address to the tune of “oh must we part, to meet no more,” and the members wipe their eyes and blow their noses in melodious symphony. This is followed by a *hard frost*, which if given with proper fire and animation, will make every body’s teeth chatter, and their flesh creep on their bones. It is to be managed by one of our furious looking little fiddlers, flourishing his fiddlestick at the rate of one hundred and fifty bars in a minute, tearing an honest, portly, peaceable semibreve “to tatters, to very rags,” and throwing every real *amateur* into an absolute ecstasy—this being what is called *execution*. I also place great dependance for *effect*, upon a quarrel among the albanians in *dutch*. To introduce a quarrel with perfect *harmony* and *concord*, you may think rather extravagant; but have not our enlightened audiences applauded the same, over and over,

in several of those musical monsters, called melodrames, wherein they even fight to a contra-dance, stab with a crotchet, and die with a quaver ! And as to the dutch language, I have succeeded most happily in imitating it, by the assistance of a tin trumpet, a cracked fiddle and a handsaw.

My second part opens with a grand musical experiment, which is nothing less than to perform a GREAT THAW !——Talk to me of your hail-storms and snow-storms, and thunder and lightning—here is something that will out-do them all—such melting airs, such soft flowing strains :—my only apprehension is from our confounded fiddlers, who have fallen of late into such an abandoned habit of sawing, and strumming, and piping “to the very top of the compass,” that they can scarcely draw a fiddlestick, without setting every nerve in your body in a tremour. Let them only acquit themselves in this part with the true *grazioso*, and they may afterwards indulge in their favourite noise to their heart’s content ; for afterwards comes the bustle, the hub-bub and the *effect* of my piece—then every catgut hero is at full liberty to scrape, and saw, and quaver, and bray, and rattle, and thunder, and produce a very tempest and whirlwind of *sweet sounds*. The ice shall crash, the sleigh-bells shall jingle, the drums shall beat on Governor’s-Island, and the whole shall conclude with *the blowing up of Sands’ powder house*.

Thus, sir, you perceive what wonderful powers of expression have been hitherto locked up in this enchanting art—a whole history is here told without the aid of speech, or writing ; and provided the hearer is in the least acquainted with musick he cannot mistake a single note. As to the blowing up of the powder-house, I look upon it as a chef d’oeuvre, which I am confident will delight all mo-

dem amateurs, who very properly estimate musick in proportion to the noise it makes, and delight in thundering, cannon and earthquakes.

I must confess, however, it is a difficult part to manage, and I have already broken six pianoes in giving it the proper force and effect. But I do not despair, and am quite certain that by the time I have broken eight or ten more, I shall have brought it to such perfection, as to be able to teach any young lady of tolerable ear, to thunder it away to the infinite delight of papa and mamma, and the great annoyance of those vandals, who are so barbarous as to prefer the simple melody of a scots air, to the sublime effusions of a modern musical doctors.

You will observe likewise, how admirably the musick of my piece is calculated to illustrate the subject—"Suit the *action* to the word, the word to the *action*." Says Hamlet—"Suit the *musick* to the *fact*, the *fact* to the *musick*," say I; and I'll be bound no melo-dramatist ever succeeded better than myself in achieving impossibilities.—Let me only have a few thorough going *amateurs* to back me, and to applaud every thing with true scientifick enthusiasm and credulity, and I have no doubt of a harvest of laurels.—Oh sir, your *men of gusto*—your men of gusto are invaluable! Dramatists, picture daubers, toad-eaters, poetasters, and musick manufacturers, might all starve or hang themselves, were it not for your *amateurs*—your *connoisseurs*, and your *men of gusto*.

In my warm anticipations of future improvement, I have sometimes almost convinced myself that musick will in time be brought to such a climax of perfection, as to supersede the necessity of speech

and writing, and every kind of social intercourse be conducted by flute and fiddle. The immense benefits that will result from this improvement must be plain to every man of the least consideration. In the present unhappy situation of mortals, a man has but one way of making himself perfectly understood—if he loses his speech, he must inevitably be dumb all the rest of his life; but having once learned this new musical language, the loss of speech will be a mere trifle not worth a moment's uneasiness. Not only this, mr. L. but it will add much to the harmony of domestick intercourse, for it is certainly much more agreeable to hear a lady give lectures on the piano, than *viva voce*, in the usual discordant measure. This manner of discoursing may also, I think, be introduced with great effect into our national assemblies, where every man, instead of wagging his tongue, should be obliged to flourish a fiddle-stick, by which means, if he said nothing to the purpose, he would at all events “discourse most eloquent musick,” which is more than can be said of most of them at present. They might also sound their own trumpets without being obliged to a hireling scribbler for an immortality of nine days, or subjected to the censure of egotism.

But the most important result of this discovery is, that it may be applied to the establishment of that great desideratum, in the learned world, a universal language. Wherever this science of musick is cultivated, nothing more will be necessary than a knowledge of its alphabet, which being almost the same every where, will amount to a universal medium of communication. A man may thus, with his violin under his arm, a piece of rosin and a few bundles of catgut, fiddle his way through

the world, as conveniently as a savoyard in France, a bag-piper in Scotland, or a musick grinder in America.

I am, &c.

DEMY SEMIQUAVER.

FROM MY ELBOW-CHAIR.

The memorandums which I published sometime since from the common-place book of mr. Jeremy Cockloft, were received with universal approbation throughout the Cockloft family, and were read with peculiar delight—by his mother and himself. Old Christopher likewise betrayed great symptoms of self-congratulation on this specimen of his son's genius, and declared he had no doubt Jeremy would make a great lawyer, for he had the *gift of the gab* to perfection. This is a common notion among parents, who generally devote their most pert and forward children to the law—and hence the ingenious sophistry, the verbose wrangling, the knowing finesse, and the superlative ventosity that give such brilliancy, froth and flummery to our bar. Jeremy was so delighted with the encomiums lavished upon him, and particularly with a compliment from Will Wizard, who declared that he was as sapient as a ten-pound justice—that he put his whole budget of memorandums into my hand, with full powers to make what use of them I pleased.

The notes which follow those already published are entitled

“ THE STRANGER IN PENNSYLVANIA.”

The first chapter contains an account of his route from Trenton to Philadelphia: It is, as usual, much in the style of Carr, sweetened, now and then, with

a sentimental episode, in the manner of Kotzebue, or a picturesque description, *a la Radcliffe*, where, in wood and water, and grove and rock, and silver streams, and golden clouds are mixed up as intelligibly as in a chinese landscape on a tea-board—and now and then he bounces upon you of a sudden with a downwright—cracker, as electrifying as those of Weld, of Moore, of Parkinson or Janson. He is extremely facetious at every tavern, and takes care that his readers shall not lose a single good saying that passed—he undertakes to explain, most learnedly, why the pennsylvanian cattle are better lodged than the farmers, and insists that they build their barns, as the old roman peasant did his trees, “for posterity and the immortal gods.” In short, he writes twenty solid pages so ingeniously that, although at first sight there appears to be a world of information, yet the only real article on which we are really instructed, is, that he travelled from Trenton to Philadelphia, and scribbled the whole way. The second chapter is written the day after his arrival, and I shall give it in his own words, as containing the very cream of a modern traveller’s observations on *men and manners*.

CHAPTER II.

MALADIES] Among the most prevalent maladies, is the punning distemper. It is a kind of mania which seizes all classes of people, who forthwith become strangely diseased in mind, and vent their fury upon the english language, committing the most unheard of barbarities. If not speedily checked it is apt to become a confirmed complaint, and to terminate in a complete mental debility. Strangers always experience an attack of the kind on their first arrival, and undergo a *seasoning* as

europeans do in the West-Indies. In my way from the stage-office to Renshaw's, I was accosted by a good-looking young gentleman from New-Jersey, who had caught the infection—he took me by the button and informed me of a contest that had lately taken place between a tailor and shoemaker about I forget what;—*SNIP* was pronounced a fellow of great *capability*, a man of gentlemanly *habits*, who would doubtless *suit* every body. The shoemaker *bristled* up at this, and *waxed* exceeding wrath—swore the tailor was but a *half-souled* fellow, and that it was easy to *shew* he was never *cut-out* for a gentleman. The *choler* of the tailor was up in an instant, he swore by his thimble that he would never *pocket* such an insult, but would *baste* any man who dared to repeat it—Honest *CRISPIX* was now worked up to his proper *pitch*, and was determined to yield the tailor no *quarters*;—he vowed he would lose his *all* but what he would gain his *ends*. He resolutely held on to the *last*, and on his threatening to *back-straft* his adversary, the tailor was obliged to *sheer* off, declaring, at the same time, that he would have him *bound over*. The young gentleman, having finished his detail, gave a most obstreperous laugh, and hurried off to tell his story to somebody else—*licentia pumica*, as Horace observes—it did my business—I went home, took to my bed, and have been ever since confined with this singular complaint.

NAME.] Having, however, looked about me with the argus eyes of a traveller, I have picked up enough in the course of my walk from the stage-office, to the hotel, to give a full and impartial account of this remarkable city. According to the good old rule, I shall begin with the etymology of its name, which, according to Linkum Fidelius,

Tom. LV. is clearly derived, either from the name of its first founder, viz. PHILO DRIPPING-PAN,* or the singular taste of the aborigines, who flourished there, on his arrival. Linkum, who is as shrewd a fellow as any theorist or F. S. A. for peeping with a dark lantern into the lumber-garret of antiquity, and lugging out all the trash which was left there for oblivion, by our wiser ancestors, supports his opinion by a prodigious number of ingenious and inapplicable arguments; but particularly rests his position on the known fact, that Philo Dripping-pan was remarkable for his predilection to eating, and his love of what the learned dutch call *doup*. Our erudite author likewise observes that the citizens are to this day, noted for their love of "a sop in the pan," and their portly appearance, "except, indeed," continues he, "the young ladies, who are perfectly genteel in their dimensions"—this, however, he ill-naturedly enough attributes to their eating pickles, and drinking vinegar; not that his idea is altogether erroneous, for I am informed that the fair sex have of late years taken a wonderful fancy to *acids*, whether to improve their health, their persons, or their dispositions, is best known to themselves; but the *effects* are known to every body.—Mem. a severe hit at skin and bone, chalky faces, delicate stomachs, and tart tempers.

SITUATION.] The philadelphians boast much of the situation and plan of their city; and well may they, since it is undoubtedly as fair and square, and regular, and right-angled, as any mechanical genius could possibly have made it. I am clearly of opinion that this hum-drum regularity has a vast effect on the character of its inhabitants and even on their

* I defy any travel longer to excel friend Jeremy in forcing a derivation.

looks, "for you will observe," writes Linkum, "that they are an honest, worthy, square, good-looking, well-meaning, regular, uniform, straight forward, clockwork, clear-headed, one-like-another, salubrious, upright, kind of people, who always go to work methodically, never put the cart before the horse, talk like a book, walk mathematically, never turn but in right angles, think syllogistically, and pun theoretically, according to the genuine rules of Cicero, and Dean Swift;—whereas the people of New-York—heaven help them—tossed about over hills and dales, through lanes and alleys, and crooked streets—continually mounting and descending, turning and twisting—whisking off at tangents, and left-angle-triangles, just like their own queer, odd, topsy-turvy rantipole city, are the most irregular, crazy-headed, quicksilver, eccentric, whim-whamsical set of mortals that ever were jumbled together in this uneven, villanous, revolving globe, and are the very antipodeans to the philadelphians."

STREETS.] The streets of Philadelphia are wide and strait, which is wisely ordered, for the inhabitants having generally crooked noses, and most commonly travelling hard after them, the good folk would undoubtedly soon *go to the wall*, in the crooked streets of our city. This fact of the crooked noses has not been hitherto remarked by any of our american travellers, but must strike every stranger of the least observation. In the course of my walk, however, I encountered one crooked street, whereupon "I thanked my stars and thought it lucky!" It was Dock-street, the only street in Philadelphia that bears any resemblance to New-York, and I recommend it to all my fellow-citizens, who come after me, as a promenade—how tender, how exquisite are the feelings awakened in the breast

of a traveller, when his eye encounters some object which reminds him of his far distant country ! The pensive new-yorker, having drank his glass of porter, and smoked his cygarr after dinner, (by the way I would recommend Sheaf, as selling the best in Philadelphia) may here direct his solitary steps and indulge in that mellow tenderness in which the sentimental Kotzebue erst delighted to wallow—he may recal the romantick scenery and graceful windings of Maiden-lane and Pearl-street, trace the tumultuous gutter in its harmonious meanderings, and almost fancy he beholds the moss-crowned roof of the Bear-market, or the majestick steeple of St. Paul's towering to the clouds. Perhaps, too, he may have left behind him some gentle fair one, who all the live-long evening, sits pensively at the window, leaning on her elbows, and counting the lingering, lame and broken-winded moments that so tediously lengthen the hours which separate her from the object of her contemplation ! delightful Lethe of the soul—sunshine of existence—wife and children poking up the cheerful evening fire—paper windows, mud walls, love in a cottage—sweet sensibility—and all that.

BANK.] Every body has heard of the famous bank of Pennsylvania, which, since the destruction of the tomb of Mausolus, and the colossus of Rhodes, may fairly be estimated as one of the wonders of the world. My landlord thinks it unquestionably the finest building upon earth:—but I never yet heard of a city that had not some grand architectural wonder. The people of Rome point with triumph to the church of St. Peter—the parisian boasts of the Louvre, and the Thuilleries—the cockney extols St. Paul's and the monument ; and the *cicerone* of one of our little villages entertained

melately with the ingenious construction of a new pillory and whipping-post. The poor citizens of New-York, are the worst off in this particular; for though no city in the union has expended more money on publick buildings, yet no city has less to brag of; they console themselves, however, with boasting of what they will have—*some fifty years hence.*

COMMERCE.] Philadelphia is a place of great trade and commerce—not but that it would have been much more so, that is, had it been built on the site of New-York: but as New-York has engrossed its present situation, I think Philadelphia must be content to stand where it does at present—at any rate it is not Philadelphia's fault, nor is it any concern of mine, so I shall not make myself uneasy about the affair. Besides, to use Trim's argument, where that city to stand where New-York does, it might, perhaps, have the misfortune to be called New-York, and not Philadelphia, which would be quite another matter, and this portion of my travels had undoubtedly been smothered before it was born—which would have been a thousand pities indeed.

MANUFACTURES.] Of the manufactures of Philadelphia I can say but little, except that the people are famous for an excellent kind of confectionary, made from the drainings of sugar. The process is simple as any in mrs. Glasse's excellent and useful work, (which I hereby recommend to the fair hands of all young ladies, who are not occupied in reading Moore's poems)—you buy a pot—put your molasses in your pot—boil your molasses to a proper consistency; but if you boil it too much, it will be none the better for it—then pour it off, and let it cool, or draw it out into little pieces about

nine inches long, and put it by for use. This manufacture is called by the bostonians *lusses candy*—by the new-yorkers *cock-a-nee-nee*—but the polite philadelphians give it a name which my delicacy will not suffer me to pronounce.—There are other manufactures in Philadelphia, such as beer, ropes, jugs, mustard, critiques, glauher salt, puns, new readings, great men, &c. but as these have been treated of by other travellers, I did not think them worthy of notice—maxim, a travel-monger should never trouble himself about any thing, that will not help towards swelling his book.

FAIR SEX.] The Philadelphia ladies are some of them beautiful, some of them tolerably good looking, and some of them, to say the truth, are not at all handsome. They are, however, very agreeable in general, except those who are reckoned witty, who, if I might be allowed to speak my mind, are very disagreeable, particularly to young gentlemen who are travelling for information. Being fond of tea-parties, they are a little given to criticism—but are in general remarkably discreet, and very industrious, as I have been assured by some of my friends. Take them all in all, however, they are much inferior to the ladies of New-York, as plainly appears, from several young gentlemen having fallen in love with some of our belles, after resisting all the female attractions of Philadelphia. From this inferiority I except one, who is the most amiable, the most accomplished, the most bewitching, and the most of every thing that constitutes the divinity of woman—mem.—Venus—Paris, and *golden apple*.

AMUSEMENTS.] The character of a people is often to be learnt from their amusements; for, in the hour of mirth the mind is unrestrained and takes its natu-

ral bent. The philadelphians are fond of dancing—but in this accomplishment they are far inferior, as I am informed by sundry travellers of observation, to the beau monde of New-York. This may be ascribed to their stupidly preferring to idle away time in the cultivation of the *head* instead of the *heels*. It is a melancholy fact, that a great number of young ladies in Philadelphia, whose minds are elegantly accomplished in literature, have sacrificed thereto all those valuable acquisitions, the pigeon-wing, the waltz, the cossack-dance, and other matters of equal importance. Now, this is what I call an absurdity—does not an architect first attend to finishing his foundation, before he thinks of decorating the attick story; and should not the *heels*, which form the foundation of the human frame, be attended to before the *head*, which is merely the garret?—Maxim.—A bad figure will sometimes pass for a good argument. Another amusement to which the philadelphians are very much given, as has been before hinted, is the celebration of tea-parties: as these answer to european routs and *conversazioni*, they are well worthy the attention of the curious, or *lounging* traveller, who has an evening on hands—which he has no objection to waste. The philadelphians conduct them with as much gravity and decorum, as they would a funeral, and very properly too, for they celebrate the obsequies of many a departed reputation. The ladies in general are disposed close together, like a setting of jewels or pearls round a locket, in all the majesty of good behaviour—and if a gentleman wishes to have a conversation with one of them, about the backwardness of the spring, the improvements in the theatre, or the merits of his horse, he is obliged to march up in the face of such volleys of eye-shot! such a for-

midable artillery of glances ! if he escapes annihilation, he should cry out a miracle ! and never encounter such deadly perils again. I remember to have once heard a very valiant british officer, who had served with great credit for some years in the train bands, declare, with a veteran oath, that sooner than encounter such deadly peril, he would fight his way clear through a London mob, though he were pelted with brick-bats all the time.

Jeremy then goes on to treat of the theatre, rope-dancing, *Spottee* the learned horse, the taverns, the watch-house and several other places of amusement and polite resort, and ends this chapter with a most unmeasureable paragraph, entitled MYSELF. As an apology, he observes, that Carr, Weld, Kotzebue, and other learned travellers, have scattered their innumerable egotisms throughout their works, whereas he has thought proper to collect his in a mass ; and, author like, he flatters himself that this will be more interesting and more thumb'd than any other portion of his narrative. To do Jeremy justice, he has acquitted himself most ably, considering he has written so much without stirring beyond the precincts of his tavern ; and he bids fair to be ranked on a par with MOORE, who saw enough of America from a stage-waggon, to damn the whole of it—or with the elegant BRYDONE, who gives a sublime description of the top of Mount Etna, which he never reached—or with the rhapsodical DUPARTY, who scampered, exclaiming, and apostrophising, and ah !-ing, and oh !-ing all over Italy—adored every marble-headed saint—deified every nameless scoundrel of a *torso*—threw himself into an ecstasy before every painting—and yet never stirred from his chamber the whole time.——Oh, these travel-mongers !
